

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 FMC-02 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06
OES-06 SSM-05 /094 W
-----032129Z 057438 /73

R 031528Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 195
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

UNCLAS CAIRO 0065

AMCONSUL PORT SAID SENDS

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, EG
SUBJ: PORT SAID COMMEMORATES 1956 BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

1. PORT SAID COMMEMORATED THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1956 BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CITY WITH PARADE AND SEVERAL INTERMINABLE SPEECHES, INCLUDING ONE DELIVERED BY PM MAMDUH SALEM IN THE NAME OF PRES SADAT. THE PARADE, WHICH CONSISTED OF TOKEN UNITS FROM THE SECOND AND THIRD ARMIES WAS MOST NOTABLE FOR THE VIVID CONTRAST IT OFFERED BETWEEN THE GENERALLY SHABBY SOVIET EQUIPMENT AND THE NEW AMERICAN JEEPS, A DISPLAY THAT WAS COMMENTED ON BY THE SOVIET CONSUL.

2. PM MAMDUH SALEM, AFTER PLACING A WREATH ON THE WAR MEMORIAL, DELIVERED A SPEECH OSTENSIBLY WRITTEN BY PRES SADAT THAT STRESSED THE BY NOW SACRED TRINITY OF ARAB UNITY, THE OPEN DOOR, AND A JUST PEACE IN ME. SALEM DESCRIBED THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE AS EGYPT'S PRINCIPAL TASK, BUT THEN HE WENT ON TO GIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL REFORM EQUAL BILLING. IN PARTICULAR, SALEM CALLED FOR AN INCREASED EFFORT TO EXPAND THE OPEN DOOR AND, ACCORDING TO UNCLASSIFIED

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LOCAL SOURCES, SAID PRIVATELY THAT PRIVATE SECTOR SHIPPING AGENCIES WOULD SOON RECEIVE APPROVAL TO HANDLE VESSELS UP TO 10,000 TONS GROSS, AS OPPOSED TO THE PRESENT 400 TON LIMIT.

3. ON PUBLIC INCIDENT MARRED SALEM'S VISIT, WHEN AN OBVIOUSLY POOR PORT SAIDI BROKE FROM THE CROWD AND RAN TOWARDS

THE MIN CARRYING A PETITION AND YELLING, "HOUSING, HOUSING."
THOUGH THE MAN WAS QUICKLY BEATEN TO THE GROUND AND
DRAGGED OFF, HIS PERFORMANCE DID UNDERSCORE THE CITY'S
MAJOR PROBLEM, I.E., LACK OF HOUSING.

4. THE PARADE ITSELF PROVED AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THE SOVIET
CONSUL, WHO SAID IT LOOKED AS IF THE SHABBIEST SOVIET EQUIP-
MENT HAD BEEN DELIBERATELY SELECTED FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY.
THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE SMOKE BELLOWING, JURY-RIGGED SOVIET
TRUCKS AND WEAPONS AND THE NEW, CLEAN AMERICAN JEEPS MOUNTED
WITH RECOILLESS RIFLES WAS, INDEED, SHARP. THE OVERALL IM-
PRESSION, AMERICAN JEEPS ASIDE, WAS ONE OF SHABBINESS, POOR
PHYSICAL READINESS, AND WITH REGARD TO THE MEN THEMSELVES,
SUPERB PHYSICAL CONDITIONING.

5. GIVEN THE FACT THAT MUCH OF THE DEBRIS AND GARBAGE THAT
ORDINARILY LITTERS THE STREETS OF PORT SAID WAS REMOVED
FOR THE OCCASION, I WOULD AGREE WITH THE LOCAL BUSINESSMAN
WHO SAID, "THE CITY NEEDS MORE OF THIS. A FEW MORE PARADES
AND THE TOWN WILL BE CLEAN". SIGNED SURBER.
EILTS

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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